



# **ADMINISTRATOR'S GUIDE TO THE WISCONSIN CAREER ASSESSMENT (WCA)**

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# Introduction

## **Wisconsin Career Assessment Overview**      <http://wca.wisc.edu>

The Wisconsin Career Assessment (WCA) is available to all Wisconsin school districts as a component of the Wisconsin Student Assessment System. The WCA is an Internet assessment designed to help 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students identify their career interests, explore careers related to those interests, and pursue education and training needed to succeed in those careers.

Students complete the 180-question assessment in approximately 15-25 minutes, and are provided with immediate results. The results describe students' career interests, list matching jobs, and allow students to explore careers in which they are interested. Results are saved automatically, and students can access their information later from any Internet-connected computer.

## **WCA Tools**      <http://wca.wisc.edu/tools>

To ensure easy and organized administration of the WCA, a special website has been created for key district and school personnel involved with administering the assessment. *WCA Tools* provides a variety of easy-to-use features that allow schools to control the administration process. For example, District and School Coordinators can edit or enter student information, print access codes, check students' WCA completion status, view student results, generate reports, and more!

## **Preparation**

If your district provided student Pre-ID information for the WKCE, we have already entered all your student information using this data. However, districts or schools must enter information about new students and edit existing information. If your district did not provide Pre-ID information, information for each student taking the assessment must be entered. Continue reading this guide for detailed and step-by-step preparation instructions for the WCA.

## **Partnerships**

The Wisconsin Career Assessment (WCA) represents a partnership between the Center on Education and Work (CEW) and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI). This partnership involves a close working relationship between Wisconsin Careers, a part of CEW, and the Career and Technical Education Team at DPI. In future years, the partnership may grow to include all of the important stakeholders in career development.

# Responsibilities of District and School Coordinators

District and school assessment coordinators are responsible for coordinating the WCA for 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students in their district or school. Most importantly, coordinators must do some preparation work before the assessment may be administered. District

coordinators may be responsible for all schools, or they may assign School Coordinators for individual schools.

The Coordinator responsibilities are:

- Giving registration codes to School Coordinators (can only be done by District Coordinator)
- Entering and editing student information
- Printing Student Distribution Sheets with access codes, and handing them out to students

In addition, Coordinators can view student's access code, WCA completion status and results, and can generate reports, all through features in the *WCA Tools* website.

# Getting Started

Before administering the assessment, District or School Coordinators must do some preparation work. Please refer to the following check-sheet of steps the District or School Coordinator must complete before administering the WCA. Each step is explained fully below the check-sheet.

Districts providing Pre-ID labels	Districts NOT providing Pre-ID labels
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>↑ Give registration codes to School Coordinators (optional, done by District Coordinators only)</li> <li>↑ Edit existing student information</li> <li>↑ Enter information for new students</li> <li>↑ Print Student Distribution Sheets that contain student access codes and directions for logging in to the WCA website</li> <li>↑ Preview the WCA (optional)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>↑ Give registration codes to School Coordinators (optional, done by District Coordinators only)</li> <li>↑ Enter information for all students (required by DPI)</li> <li>↑ Print Student Distribution Sheets that contain student access codes and directions for logging in to the WCA website</li> <li>↑ Preview the WCA (optional)</li> </ul>
<b>Administer WCA to students</b>	<b>Administer WCA to students</b>

## Giving registration codes to School Coordinators

In some cases, staff at individual schools may play the largest role in administering the WCA. Therefore, we have given District Coordinators the option of assigning School Coordinators to schools in their district. School Coordinators can then be responsible for creating student accounts, editing existing student information, generating school reports, and viewing student results through the *WCA Tools* website. A school may have only one School Coordinator.

To assign School Coordinators, the District Coordinator must login to the *WCA Tools* website (<http://wca.wisc.edu/tools>) and:

1. Click *Coordinator Info*, the first item in the menu.
2. Click *Print Registration Codes for School Coordinator*
3. Select the schools you want to assign, and click *Print Letters*, at the bottom of the page. Each letter includes the School Coordinator's registration code for a school, directions for login, and an explanation of School

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#### Coordinator responsibilities.

4. Distribute the sheets to the appropriate individuals. *NOTE: If an individual will be coordinating the assessment in several schools, they will need the corresponding sheet for EACH school..*

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#### Editing student

##### Pre-ID information

If your district provided Pre-ID labels for the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Exam (WKCE), the information was used to create WCA student accounts. Errors may exist in the Pre-ID information, so District or School Coordinators should check existing student information, and make any necessary changes before administering the assessment.

To edit existing student information, login to the WCA Tools website (<http://wca.wisc.edu/tools>) and:

1. Click *Student Info*
2. Click *Create Accounts/Edit Student Information*
3. After selecting the appropriate grade and school, you will see a list of your students. To make specific changes, click on the appropriate student's name.
4. (Optional) **Print a list of all student demographic information, for easy correcting.** Ensure that student information is correct with our printer friendly list. Each student's name and corresponding demographic information is printed on one line of text, with dozens of students on each page – the perfect format for quick checking and editing. Just look for the button on the top right hand corner of the *Enter/Edit Student Information* page

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*REMEMBER: Student demographic data is confidential.*

#### Entering new or additional student information to create accounts

DPI requires that names and demographic information for each student be entered before they may begin the assessment. WCA access codes are generated for students only after their information has been entered.

- If your district provided pre-ID information for the WKCE, WCA accounts with access codes have been created for most of your students. However, names and information for new students must be entered before they may take the assessment.
- If your district did not provide pre-ID information for the WKCE, names and information must be entered for all students taking the assessment.

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To enter additional students, login to the WCA *Tools* website (<http://wca.wisc.edu/tools>) and:

1. Click *Student Information*
2. Click *Create Accounts/Edit Student Information*
3. After selecting the appropriate grade and school, click *Add new student*
4. Enter in student name and information, then click *Submit* at the bottom of the page

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**Access Codes -  
Printing Student  
Distribution Sheets**

Each student must have an access code to take the WCA. *You must first ensure that information for all students taking the assessment has been entered and is correct,* because the Distribution Sheet is generated from student information. See above for more information on entering and editing student information.

Student Distribution Sheets are in a memo format, each personally addressed to a student. It includes the student's name, access code, WCA Internet address, and directions for taking the assessment. Distribution sheets should be handed out to students immediately before taking the assessment.

To print Student Distribution Sheets, go to the WCA *Tools* website (<http://wca.wisc.edu/tools>) and:

1. Click on *Student Information*
2. Click on *Print access codes for your students*
3. Select the appropriate school and grade. Then click on the option you desire: printing distributions sheets for all students, for single students, or for newly added students.

Tell students to keep their Distribution Sheet. They will need their access code if they are unable to finish the WCA in one sitting, or if they want to return to the website to continue exploring careers.

*NOTE: These accounts are linked to personal demographic information for each student. It is not appropriate for students to use another's registration code.*

**Previewing the  
WCA**

You can easily preview and/or take the WCA from the WCA *Tools* website (<http://wca.wisc.edu/tools>). This is the exact same WCA that students will be taking.

To preview the WCA, log in to the WCA *Tools* website and

click *Test drive the WCA*.

## Administering the WCA to students

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### **Directions for student login**

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Each student must have his or her personal WCA access code to enter the WCA website and take the assessment (see the previous section for more information about access codes).

To take the assessment, students must:

1. Go to the WCA website: <http://wca.wisc.edu>
2. Enter the personal WCA access code from their Distribution Sheet and click *Login*
3. Confirm their name, and click *Stop* or *Continue*
4. Read the directions and begin taking the assessment

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### **Directions for completion of assessment**

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After students have answered all questions, they should click *Show profile*. (This option is only available on the last set of questions.) When students click *Show Profile*, they will be provided with the results of the assessment.

Students do not have to complete the entire assessment in one sitting. However, they may only take the assessment once in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and once in 10<sup>th</sup> grade.

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### **Description of the results**

After students click *Show Profile* they will see a results page that includes a 3-letter interest profile, a graph of their interests based on how they answered questions, and information to help students understand their results. Students can also click on *See matching occupations* to see a list of careers that match their interests.

The profile is based on Holland's vocational personality theory, that people tend to be more interested in and successful at jobs similar to their personality type. Each letter in the interest profile represents one of 6 personality types: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional. The letters in order represent the student's primary, secondary, and tertiary interest areas.

For more information about Holland's theory and scoring, see the Appendix of this guide.



## Student options after completion of WCA

After students take the WCA they can continue to use the WCA website in a variety of ways to learn more about careers that match their interests. Using the WCA site, students can:

- See a list of occupations that match their interest profile
- Learn about their matching occupations– job descriptions, salaries, helpful high school courses and entry information.
- Save occupations in their “Favorites” list
- Link to other websites full of information about occupations – the WCA site provides informative links for most occupations.
- View results and occupational information at home with parents and guardians and discuss their career interests.
- Print a results page that includes a student’s 3-letter profile, a description of their profile, and descriptions of their “Favorite” occupations.
- Link to the WISCareers Internet site to expand their occupation research by learning about the educational path, local labor market information, and more! (Available only to schools with the WISCareers Internet site)

Continue reading for directions and further information on how students can choose any of these options above.

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### **Show a list of matching occupations**

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After students have completed the WCA, they can see a list of occupations that have similar interest profiles to their own. Students can look at their matching occupations immediately after the assessment. Or, they can use their access code to login to the WCA at a later time to learn about matching careers.

To see a list of matching careers, students must click *Show Matching Occupations* at the top of their results page.

If students log in at a later time, they will automatically be taken to their results page. They may again click on *Show Matching Occupations* at the top of the page.

*NOTE: Students must complete the entire assessment before they can see a list of matching occupations.*

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**Learn about occupations**

Using the WCA website, students can learn about jobs that match their interest. Students just need to click on one of their matching occupations.

Once students have selected an occupation, students can use the toolbar at the top of the page to learn about the job. Students can read about:

- Tasks and Activities (occupational specific tasks, and generalized work activities)
- Setting Your Course (Getting a job and helpful high school courses)
- Wages and Outlook (Wisconsin wage and employment outlook information)
- Students can also use Web Links to go to professional association websites for more information, or can get more information at WISCareers (described below)

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**Print a results page**

Students can print a paper copy of their WCA results. A printout includes a student's 3-letter profile, a brief description of the profile, a list of matching occupations, a sample of "liked" and "disliked" work activities, and summary descriptions of the student's selected *Favorite* occupations.

Students can print their results page by:

1. Going to their list of matching occupations by clicking on *Show matching occupations* or *Occupations* in the top menu bar.
2. Clicking *Print WCA results*, in the top menu bar

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**Save occupations in "Favorites"**

Students can choose up to three occupations in which they are most interested and identify them as "Favorites." These occupations are highlighted for easy identification at a later time, and summary descriptions of those occupations are included in the printed results.

To identify a favorite, students should:

1. Select an occupation that matches their interests.
2. In the *Favorite Occupation?* box in the top left corner of the screen, select *Yes*.

Selected occupations will have a *Favorite* button to the left. If a students wish to deselect an occupation, they follow the same

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directions above, but select *No* in the *Favorite Occupation?* box.

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**Link to websites of professional associations and organizations**

Professional associations and organizations can provide a wealth of information and personal contacts for students. Using the WCA website, students can link to the websites of professional associations relevant to their occupations of interest.

To find these professional association links, students should:

1. Click an occupation of interest
2. Click *WebLinks* in the top menu
3. Choose and click on a professional organization to link to its website, if available

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**Use the WCA website at a later date**

Students can login to the WCA website from any Internet-connected computer until the end of the school year. Students can use the WCA website to continue learning about careers, or to talk about their results with their parents or guardians.

Students can review their results by:

- 1.) Going to the WCA homepage (<http://wca.wisc.edu>)
- 2.) Enter their assigned access code

If students have completed the assessment, the WCA website will automatically show the students their results page. From that page, students can continue exploring their career interests.

**Link to WISCareers and continue learning about careers**

Students can continue learning about careers of interest by linking to the *WISCareers* Internet site (available only to schools with access to *WISCareers*). This site provides information about Wisconsin and national labor market information, education paths and programs, Wisconsin employers, additional weblinks and much more! In addition, students can save their assessment score and favorite occupations in their *WISCareers* Locker.

Students can link to *WISCareers* by selecting an occupation, and clicking on *Get more information at WISCareers* in the top menu.

*NOTE: This option is only available to schools with access to WISCareers.*

# View students' completion status and results

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## Check on student WCA completion status

District and School Coordinators can check a student's WCA completion status with the *WCA Tools* website. This feature shows all students in a grade at a school with their completion status: Completed, Started but not completed, Not Started, and WCA code not distributed to student.

You can view students' completion status by logging into the *WCA Tools* website (<http://wca.wisc.edu/tools>) and:

1. Click *Student Information* in the main menu
2. Click *Track your students' assessment status and results*
3. Choose the appropriate school and grade. You will see a list of students with their completion status. You will have the option of browsing through the list using the alphabet feature, or searching for a student.

If a student's name is blue and underlined, they have completed their assessment. You may click on his or her name to see the results.

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## View student results

The *WCA Tools* website allows Coordinators to view student WCA results. The results page you view is identical to the results page students receive when they complete the WCA. It includes a 3-letter interest profile, a description of the results, a sample of "liked" and "disliked" work activities, and a link to matching occupations. Counselors and teachers can use this feature as starting point to talk with students about their preferred activities, and how they can relate to future careers.

To view student results, login to the *WCA Tools* website (<http://wca.wisc.edu/tools.asp>) and:

- 1.) Click *Student Information*
- 2.) Click *Track your students' assessment status and results*
- 3.) After you select the appropriate school and grade level, you will see a list of students and their completion status. Clicking on their name will bring you to their results page.

*NOTE: You may only view the results page for students that have completed the assessment.*

## Generate Reports

District and School Coordinators can learn about careers in which students are most interested. Using the Reports feature of WCA Tools, Coordinators can generate reports such as Top occupations accessed by your students and Top occupations placed on your students Favorites list. In addition to looking at a report for all students, you can generate a report based on a demographic factor such as:

- Gender
- Race/Ethnicity
- Disability
- Migrant Status
- English Proficiency
- Economic Status

To generate a report, a District or School Coordinator must log in to the *WCA Tools* website and:

1. Click Reports, in the main menu
2. Select the report in which you are interested
3. Select the school and grade level. You may also choose a demographic factor (optional).
4. Click Submit

## Additional WCA Tools Features for Coordinators

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### **Give counselors or teachers access to student results**

*Currently, only District and School Coordinators have access to student WCA completion status and results. Counselor and teacher access will be available in January, 2004.*

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### **Add schools to your account (for individuals coordinating the WCA in several schools)**

Each school has a unique School Assessment Coordinator code. If you are coordinating the WCA for several schools, you don't need to create a separate username and password for each school. Instead, you can add schools to your account, and access information for all of your schools using **one** username and password. NOTE: To add schools to your account you will still need the unique School Assessment Coordinator

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registration code for each school. If you do not have this code, see your District Assessment Coordinator.

To add schools to your account:

- 1.) Enter the *WCA Tools* website. If you have already created a username and password, use them. Otherwise, register using a School Assessment Coordinator registration codes from one of your schools.
- 2.) Click on *Add Schools to My Account* in the main menu.
- 3.) Type in the registration codes for a school you wish to add, then click *Add School*.
- 4.) Repeat as often as necessary

**Look up/edit  
School Assessment  
Coordinator  
names, or  
usernames and  
passwords**

District Assessment Coordinators may look up or edit School Assessment Coordinators' usernames and passwords, as well as their first and last names. To lookup or edit School Assessment Coordinator information, go to the *WCA Tools* website (<http://wca.wisc.edu/tools>) and

- 1.) Click on *Coordinator Information* in the main menu
- 2.) Click on *View/Edit School Assessment Coordinator Information*

## Contact Information

Have further questions? Please contact us with any questions or difficulties that cannot be answered by the Administrator's Guide.

**For technical support**

Contact technical support at Wisconsin Careers (7:30-9:30 and 2:30-4:30) [wctech@education.wisc.edu](mailto:wctech@education.wisc.edu) or 1-800-442-4612, ex 12.

**For questions about the Wisconsin Career Assessment itself, including content, validity, scoring, etc.,**

Contact David Caulum, Project Director, at Wisconsin Careers [dcaulum@education.wisc.edu](mailto:dcaulum@education.wisc.edu) or 1-800-442-4612, ex. 52

**For questions about the partnership between DPI and Wisconsin Careers, or about DPI providing the WCA for Wisconsin students,**

Contact Barbara Bitters at the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) [barbara.bitters@dpi.state.wi.us](mailto:barbara.bitters@dpi.state.wi.us) or (608) 266-9609

Please share feedback and ideas for future development and improvement of this tool at any time. Thank you!

# **APPENDIX**

## Scoring Rules

The following rules have been used to define the student's profile and construct the graphic that shows the results. Three major considerations have been applied in constructing these rules: the standard error of measurement of the instrument is 5 points; the Holland Hexagonal Model contains theoretical constructs pertaining to combinations of interest areas; and, the response of "dislike" are treated as more important than a response of "unsure." However, it should be emphasized that there is no research literature bearing upon the latter statement, only content validity. Under these rules, every student will receive a profile; however, to the degree these rules must be applied, appropriate cautionary statements will be included in the student's report.

The number of "Like" answers given to the work activities related to a given interest area determine their order. Typically, the three interest areas receiving the highest scores are displayed in order for an individual's profile. However, because the standard error of measurement of the Interest Profiler is 5, interest areas within 5 points of each other are considered "similar," interest areas and interest areas that are more than 5 points from each other are "dissimilar." Below are the rules for creating profiles with "similar" or tied interest areas:

1. If the first and second scores are similar, but the second, third and fourth scores are dissimilar, then both the first and second interest areas will be used as a primary interest areas in the profile, and the third area will be considered tertiary.
2. If the first and second highest scores are similar and the third score is similar to the second score but more than 5 points away from the first and fourth score, then the second score will be compared to the first and third scores. If it is closest to the first score, both the first and second areas will be used as primary interest areas in the profile. If it is closest to the third area, both second and third areas will be used as secondary areas.
3. If the first and second highest scores are dissimilar, the third and fourth scores are dissimilar, but the second and third are similar, then the second and third scores will be listed as secondary interest areas.
4. If the first and second highest scores and third scores are each spaced 5 or more points apart, but the third and fourth scores are similar, and the fourth score is dissimilar from the fifth, then the third and fourth scores will both be used as tertiary areas of interest.
5. If scores are similar in any other way than described above, then the interest area that is ranked higher is determined through a combination of the number of "dislike" or "D" answers given to questions related to the interest area and its location on the Holland Hexagonal Model. The Holland Theory indicates that interest areas that are close together in the model should be given priority over those further apart.
6. If the "D" scores and the Hexagonal Model do not resolve ties, then, randomization is used to assign the higher ranking.



**Graphic Display**

The graphic display corresponds to the scoring rules and shows the relative position of the student's result for each interest area. In all cases, the dark oblong figure will include the relative location of the student's number of "like" responses to each interest area; however, the position will be adjusted to logically correspond to the resulting profile.